

Amendments to the Claims:

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Original) A method of making a polymer electrolyte membrane comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing a mixture of a polymer comprising a fluorinated backbone and first pendant groups, wherein said first pendant groups comprise groups selected from sulfonyl halide and sulfonate groups, and a bisamidine compound;
 - b) forming said mixture into a membrane; and
 - c) reacting the amidine groups of said bisamidine compound to form triazine groups.
2. (Original) The method according to claim 1 additionally comprising, after step c), the step of:
 - d) converting said groups selected from sulfonyl halide and sulfonate groups to sulfonic acid groups.
3. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said first pendant groups are according to the formula: $-R^1-SO_2X$, where X is $-O^-A^+$, where A^+ is an organic or inorganic cation, and where R^1 is a branched or unbranched perfluoroalkyl or perfluoroether group comprising 1-15 carbon atoms and 0-4 oxygen atoms.
4. (Original) The method according to claim 3 wherein A^+ is ammonium ion.
5. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said first pendant groups are according to the formula: $-R^1-SO_2X$, where X is a halogen and where R^1 is a branched or unbranched perfluoroalkyl or perfluoroether group comprising 1-15 carbon atoms and 0-4 oxygen atoms.
6. (Original) The method according to claim 5 wherein X is F.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said first pendant groups are according to the formula: $-O-CF_2-CF_2-CF_2-SO_2F$.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said first pendant groups are according to the formula: $-O-CF_2-CF(CF_3)-O-CF_2-CF_2-SO_2F$.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, branched or unbranched, partially or fully fluorinated, alkyl or ether group comprising 1-15 carbon atoms and 0-4 oxygen atoms.

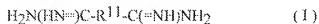
10. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, perfluorinated alkyl group comprising 2-8 carbon atoms.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said bisamidine compounds are according to the formula: $H_2N(HN=)C-C_4F_8-C(=NH)NH_2$.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 3 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, branched or unbranched, partially or fully fluorinated, alkyl or ether group comprising 1-15 carbon atoms and 0-4 oxygen atoms.

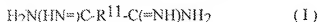
13. (Original) The method according to claim 3 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, perfluorinated alkyl group comprising 2-8 carbon atoms.

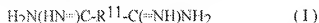
14. (Original) The method according to claim 3 wherein said bisamidine compounds are according to the formula: $\text{H}_2\text{N}(\text{HN}=\text{C}-\text{C}_4\text{F}_8-\text{C}(=\text{NH})\text{NH}_2$.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 5 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, branched or unbranched, partially or fully fluorinated, alkyl or ether group comprising 1-15 carbon atoms and 0-4 oxygen atoms.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 5 wherein said bisamidine compounds are selected from compounds according to the formula:



where R^{11} is a divalent, perfluorinated alkyl group comprising 2-8 carbon atoms.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 5 wherein said bisamidine compounds are according to the formula: $\text{H}_2\text{N}(\text{HN}=\text{C}-\text{C}_4\text{F}_8-\text{C}(=\text{NH})\text{NH}_2$.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein step b) comprises imbibing said mixture into a porous supporting matrix.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 18 wherein said porous supporting matrix is a porous polytetrafluoroethylene web.

20.-47. (Canceled)